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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/565,871	07/27/2006	Ralf Peter Mueller	1401D-003 (CI0111US)	7341
25215 7590 08/21/2008 DOBRUSIN & THENNISCH PC 29 W LAWRENCE ST SUITE 210 PONTIAC, MI 48342			EXAMINER ALIE, GHASSEM	
			ART UNIT 3724	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 41-44, 68-69 and 76-82, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including a rotating cutting blade which is mounted so as to be displaceable parallel to a rotation axis of the cutting blade.
 - II. Claims 50-52, drawn to a method for axial displacement of a cutting blade during operation of a slicing machine including the step of axially displacing a counterweight on a drive shaft of the cutting blade in an opposite direction from the cutting blade.
 - III. Claims 53-56, drawn to a method of using at least one counterweight in a slicing machine including the step of mounting the cutting blade, the counterweight, or both so as to be displaceable parallel to the axis of rotation of the cutting blade.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions II and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus which is used to slice on object other than food and does not have a rotating cutting blade that is displaceable parallel to a rotation axis of the cutting blade.
3. Inventions III and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The

inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus which is used to slice on object other than food. In addition, the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process that does not include the step of measuring a torque produced by a drive of the cutting blade.

4. Inventions II and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct if they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants, and if it is shown that at least one subcombination is separately usable. In the instant case, e.g., subcombination II has a separate utility such as it could be used without the step of displacing the cutting blade, the counterweight or both parallel to the axis of rotation of the cutting blade as set forth in invention III. Conversely, subcombination III has a separate utility such as it could be used without the step of mounting a counterweight on a drive shaft of the cutting blade as set forth in invention II. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

The examiner has required restriction between subcombinations usable together. Where applicant elects a subcombination and claims thereto are subsequently found allowable, any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the allowable subcombination will be examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. See MPEP § 821.04(a). Applicant is advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, a

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claim that is allowable in the present application, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application.

5. Upon the election of Invention I (41-44, 68-69 and 76-82) applicant must elect one of the inventions in the following Groups.

IA Claims 43-44, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including a cutting blade and a counterweight that are displaceable independently of a rotational speed of the cutting blade.

IB Claim 68, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including a cutting gap that is adjusted while the cutting blade is stationary or rotating.

IC Claim 69, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including an adjusting limit stop.

ID Claims 76-77 and 80-82, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including a feedback controlled drive shaft.

IE Claims 78-79, drawn to a slicing machine for slicing food including a crescent shaped blade or a circular saw.

Claim 41 link(s) inventions IA-IE and claim 78 links claims 80 and 82 in invention ID. The restriction requirement among the linked inventions is **subject to** the nonallowance of the linking claim(s) 41 and 78. Upon the indication of allowability of the linking claim(s), the restriction requirement as to the linked inventions **shall** be withdrawn and any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the allowable linking claim(s) will be rejoined and fully examined for patentability in accordance with

37 CFR 1.104 **Claims that require all the limitations of an allowable linking claim** will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier. Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312. Applicant(s) are advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, the allowable linking claim, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application. Where a restriction requirement is withdrawn, the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 121 are no longer applicable. *In re Ziegler*, 443 F.2d 1211, 1215, 170 USPQ 129, 131-32 (CCPA 1971). See also MPEP § 804.01.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

6. Inventions IA-IE are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct if they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants, and if it is shown that at least one subcombination is separately usable. In the instant case, e.g., subcombination IA has a separate utility such as it could be used without the above-mentioned features in inventions IB-IE. Conversely, each one of the subcombinations IB-IE has a separate utility such as it could be used without the above-mentioned feature in invention IA. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

The examiner has required restriction between subcombinations usable together. Where applicant elects a subcombination and claims thereto are subsequently found allowable, any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the allowable subcombination will be examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR

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1.104. See MPEP § 821.04(a). Applicant is advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, a claim that is allowable in the present application, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application.

7. Restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper because all these inventions listed in this action are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious search and examination burden if restriction were not required because one or more of the following reasons apply:

(a) the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification;

(b) the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art due to their recognized divergent subject matter;

(c) the inventions require a different field of search (for example, searching different classes/subclasses or electronic resources, or employing different search queries);

(d) the prior art applicable to one invention would not likely be applicable to another invention;

(e) the inventions are likely to raise different non-prior art issues under 35 U.S.C. 101 and/or 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

8. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of an invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) **and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.**

9. The election of an invention may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse. Traversal must be presented at the time of election in order to be considered timely. Failure to timely traverse the requirement will result in the loss of right to petition under 37 CFR 1.144. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable on the elected invention. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable upon the elected invention.

10. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

11. The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the

election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ghassem Alie whose telephone number is (571) 272-4501. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Boyer Ashley can be reached on (571) 272-4502. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (501) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, SEE <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

GA

/Ghassem Alie/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3724

July 28, 2008